14 May 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Project Contract Memoranda

1. The presently operational OXCART program provides the intelligence community with a survivable quick-reaction reconnaissance capability which has been highly successful while operating within the Southeast Asia defensive environment. It is estimated, however, that this system could probably not survive in the Soviet defensive environment and it is further estimated that the future defensive capabilities of the non-Soviet Bloc areas will increase sufficiently to deny intelligence collection by the OXCART or any other vehicle with similar performance ability. Therefore the FY-69 President's Budget included as a General R&D effort

25X1 [redacted] for a concept study to explore various methods of achieving a survivable quick-reaction capability for the projected Soviet Bloc and other defensive environments through the 1975-80 time period.

2. The goal of this study will be to arrive at various preliminary design concepts for performing an airborne image forming reconnaissance collection function and comply with the requirements of survivability and quick-reaction within the prescribed environment. A minimum of constraints will

be imposed on the contractors to insure original and imaginative thinking. Specific direction will be given to pursue the manned vs. unmanned options as well as investigating the self-accelerator vs. air launched possibility. Although an image forming sensor is a requirement, only broad estimates of weight and volume will be considered so as not to limit vehicle regions of operation initially. Obviously specific sensor capability and requirements must be considered in any follow-on effort.

3. Further consideration must be given to the contractor options. There is some merit in dealing just with a "think group" having no vested interest in hardware. On the other hand, most major airframe manufacturers have, as part of their organization, advanced concept groups which not only perform the functions of a "think group" but have the added advantage of practical inputs from the various engineering and manufacturing components.